



Thanksgiving Prep

3 WEEKS
BEFORE

Decide which recipes you want to make, keeping in mind that there's only so much one person—and one kitchen—can do. If you really do need 10 side dishes, look for recipes that use the same oven temperature, so they can cook at the same time. Determine which recipes can be done ahead and star those.

2 WEEKS
BEFORE

At this point, you should have a good idea of how many people will be coming over. Determine what size turkey you will need and call your grocery to reserve it—all grocery stores do this, from big chains to specialty, so don't feel like this is a burden. Reserving your bird will keep you from having to sift through and settle for a size that's *about right*. It will also keep the fridge nice and clear up until turkey time.

1 WEEK
BEFORE

Your recipes are written and your bird is reserved. Time to turn the ingredients needed into a shopping list. If possible, try and plan your grocery trip during a time when the store isn't busy—very early in the morning or late in the evening. This will make you feel less rushed and therefore less likely to forget something. If wine or specialty cocktails are being served, get them during the same shopping trip. The only thing more crowded than the grocery, during the holidays, is the liquor store! And don't forget the turkey!

WEEKEND
BEFORE

We wish a second trip to the grocery wasn't necessary but we're practical; therefore, we're penciling it in here. Time to grab anything you forgot or that what *accidentally* eaten or used up since your last trip. And, if you want fresh flowers or greenery, buy them this trip. Lastly, whether you're eating on fine china or paper plates, it's a good idea to do a practice run. Is everything clean? Do you have enough?

EVE OF
THANKS

Remember the recipes you starred signaling they could be made in advance? Time to get started. As a general rule, dishes served cold, like cranberry sauce or slaw, can be made as early as Tuesday. Cover and refrigerate. Chop onions, veggies, herbs and assemble any dishes that require cooking. The goal is to let the oven do all the work tomorrow. Anything you can prepare today, whether in whole or in parts, is one step closer.

THANKS-
GIVING

Determine how long the turkey and side dishes need to cook (and rest) then work backwards from the time you plan to serve dinner. Doing this will decide your start time. Call upon others in the household to help out—assist in keeping the kitchen clean, setting the table or any last minute runs. Lastly, try to relax and remember, above all else, today is about gathering with family and friends. If you burn the bread, I promise they'll still love you!

